

Film Score Blogs by Bill Wrobel

Wednesday, October 6, 2004 at 7:07 pm [Blog # 6]

All right. I spent the last two days at USC Cinema & Television Library researching scores. Today was particularly productive and busy working on the large bounded conductor scores of *The High & The Mighty* and also *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. The freeways getting there were bad, but I guess that's because I left home after 8 am instead of the usual 9 am. I wanted to get there when it opened at nine so that I could haunt the shelves for film music books and magazines. The Cecil B. DeMille Reading Room does not open until 10 am (and only on Monday thru Wednesday).

The first book I looked up yesterday morning was *Hollywood Holyland: The Filming & Scoring of the Greatest Story Ever Told* by Ken Darby. I xeroxed the scoring section starting with page 153, the "Interlude" or foreword by Fred Steiner written February 1987. Then I copied next "Section III" starting on page 178 that began the real meat of the scoring process. How Darby faithfully remembered each and every word in his conversation with Newman is beyond me! The book is fine and interesting, but I preferred reading the other book I grabbed from the stacks titled *Hugo Friedhofer: The Best Years of His Life: A Hollywood master of Music for the Movies*. His reminiscences of former colleagues such as Korngold and Steiner, and his informed reflections on the process of scoring for movies are quite informative. He didn't like Delius, however!

I also xeroxed a bit from a book analyzing the music of Alex North (forgot the title and author!). He gives an analysis of *Spartacus*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* and others. I have to find time to read it, though.

I luckily found a detailed account called "Dead Men's Diary" by Preston Neal Jones in the Spring 1982 issue of *Pro Musica Sana*. It details the ongoing events of the recording of Rozsa's *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*. I am continuing (and finishing) my own work on that score tomorrow at UCLA.

I don't know how I originally missed it, but I found Graham Bruce's *Bernard Herrmann: Film Music & Narrative* originally written in 1982 as a university thesis, I believe. I may have a chance to read the parts I xeroxed by Sunday or Monday.

I also copied very tiny portions of *Hitchcock & the Making of Marnie*. Very little was discussed on Herrmann. Another book I looked at was *Hollywood Theory, Non-Hollywood Practice* (a very unusual title). Previn's *No Minor Chords* had very little to discuss about his involvement with *My Fair Lady*—which surprises me. *Double Life* by Rozsa was taken out by somebody, and so was the autobiography by James Arness of *Gunsmoke* fame.

Now: Ned provided me with some materials yesterday. Unfortunately, there were no full score of T.G.S.E.T. by Newman, only his oversized and detailed (but chaotic!)

sketches. So first I worked on a version of the Main Title to *The Rifleman* by Herschel Burke Gilbert (filed away in the Chuck Connors Collection). It was a fully orchestrated cue but I believe it's a version of the M.T. Not sure. I seem to remember strings being prominent in the score, but perhaps not the M.T. I haven't heard it for a long time. At any rate, the instrumentation is as follows:

2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 Eb alto saxes, 2 Bb tenor saxes, 1 Eb baritone sax, 1 Eb baritone horn, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, snare drum, cymbal, bass drum, guitar, and string bass. *Allegro* in Cut time, 4 pages, 30 bars. It took two hours but I managed to hand-copy the entire Main Title.

Then I started work on the Newman sketches for *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. I believe Raksin called it the "Saddest" story ever told due to all the heartache and headaches associated with the scoring of the flop. It certainly was no "giant" of a movie directed by Stevens! The first sketch cue I looked at was "The Arrest of Jesus" (Reel 6/A). 24 men were used in this cue—players, not composers or orchestrators! They include 3 english horns, 2 bass clarinets, 1 contra-bassoon, 4 horns, 3 Pos, tuba, 3 string basses, 1 timp, 6 celli. I hand-copied the first six bars. There were seven lines (or staves) for this cue with many time meter changes (which seems typical for Newman in this score!). The instrumentation was annotated in later by someone.

Next cue offered was "Aram, The First Witness" (Reel 7/1). *Molto tranquillo* in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. Annotated in pencil was the instrumentation: 8 violins I, 8 violins II, 4 violas, 4 celli, 2 basses, harp, 3 percussion, 4 flutes (also doubling), 3 bassoons (1 C. Fag doubling), oboe, 2 bass clarinets, 3 horns, 3 Pos (1 bass), and 1 tuba. 47 men were used. The cue opens with the alto flute.

Next I looked at "The Nativity" cued dated March 8. 1964. Newman prints on the cue:

"N.B. I've kept the colors dark, using material of the magi, to avoid the trap of cliché melodramatic music used for such scenes as Herod's Horsemen, etc; and to establish framework, by sharp contrast, for the Star of Bethlehem which follows directly. Please note that I have eliminated trumpets (Sc 17) (Walls of Jerusalem—sundown). The effects for the evening star (sc. 18) if any, will have to wait until we see film..."

Next in the Act II sketches (random order provided as a bundle) was "Garden of Gethsemane (The Betrayal)" (R5/2-6/1). It starts in $\frac{3}{2}$ time with *sord* horn I *pp sempre portamento* on small octave F# to same F# half notes (tenuto) to F# tenuto half note tied to half note next bar, etc. 64 players were used for this cue, including 20 violins, 6 violas, 4 VC, 2 CB, 2 harps, 1 celeste, 3 percussion, 4 flutes, 1 oboe (oboe D-Amour doubling), English horn, 2 clarinets (1 in A), 2 bass clarinets, 3 Fags, 1 C. Fag, 4 horns, 2 Pos, 1 bass Pos, 1 tuba, 2 mezzo sopranos. The cue lasts 6:13. It was corrected 10/14/64.

Several cues are marked as "Rough Prelim Sketch" or even (as in "Return From Egypt") "This is just an exploration or exercise." It *also* states next to that, "Rough, prelim sketch" ! Fred Steiner and Hugo Friedhofer were brought in to help out Newman's near crisis situation. In today's (Wednesday's) research with the huge Conductor book

with the red covers, it shows which orchestrators adapted which cues. The first one adapted was I believe "Flight Into Egypt (Revised)" by Hugo W. Friedhofer on 12-2-64. Next was "John the Baptist" (R5/1) adapted by Fred Steiner. Correction, the first adaptation was apparently "Infant Massacre" by Fred Steiner on 11/10/64 but this cue was not used (or only in part). What a shame. It looked like a real winner! But I believe the scene was cut drastically (I'll check). The cue "Forty Days In The Wilderness" was adapted by Fred Steiner as well. Next cue happens to be an adapted one as well titled "The Highest Summit" (adapted by Friedhofer). This cue was also revised the month afterward, and Friedhofer did it. The very next cue is also adapted (by Steiner) titled "I Will Make You Fishers of Men." The cue "Jesus on Lazarus' Porch" (both Parts) is also adapted by Steiner. There are two cues (one revised) of "Matthew, The Tax Collector." Etc. I preferred working with the finished and clean-cut Conductor score than Newman's own confusing sketches.

But even worse than Newman's (under the circumstances of the edits, etc) was Tiomkin's sketches for *The High & the Mighty*! His handwriting is pretty terrible! He does not title his cues (just Reel/Parts it). I am glad the sketches are present as a historical artifact, but I would much prefer the full score! His sketches are usually 4 staves or lines set in an oblong paper format that is folded and taped. He pencils his notes, and adds a lot of red pencil correction marks and indications and additions. Some green pencil markings are there (usually for timings), and also blue pencil markings (often for bar numbers). The first four bars of the Main Title are the "Introductory" (according to cue sheets) but in Bar 5 Tiomkin marks in red "The High & Mighty." This is the start of the official T.H.A.T.M. theme that starts at :12 and lasts for 43 seconds. Incidentally, there are nine folders containing the Tiomkin sketches. Folder # 1 contains the M.T., R1/2A, R2/1, and R2/2. There are 53 bars in the Main Title. The duration I am not sure of at this moment. In red it is marked as 2:13, but in green it's marked as 1:54. The Conductor book states 2:13, however. Tiomkin never put any date of composition (start or finish) on his cues.

Folder 2 was interesting because on the R 3/1 cue ("The Plane" cue in the cue sheets) in the back of one page are instrumentation rundowns annotated in pencil:

20 "VL," 6 "VLA," 6 "C," 3 "B," 1 (??), then 6 horns, 4 "Tr," 4 trbs, 4 drs, 2 per, 2 harps, 1 Novachord, then 3 flutes, 2 oboes, 5 clarinets, 2 bassoons. So 71 players were used.

The jubilant "Giubilo" R18/2 cue is not in the Conductor book, but it is in the sketches. It is 124 bars in length and 4:39 duration. On the sketch Tiomkin wrote "Dedicated to Mr. William Welman."

The Conductor book is bound with crimson (and black creases) covers. The first page is the Main Title page. Curiously it is stamped in red "Supreme Court New York County" and under that "Defendant's Ex [exhibit] T" and then "Date 12/16/58." Apparently there was some sort of lawsuit involving the music and this very conductor book was an exhibit item.

So I wrote all the specifications (including Reel/Part designations) of each cue (bar length, timings, etc). Then I hand-copied portions of each cue that I had time for, usually just beginning bars. It was fun! I learned a tremendous amount. But by 3 pm I had to stop so that I could at least get thru Act I of Newman's biblical score (I had already worked on much of the Act II cues from the sketches the day before). I missed a lot of the ending reels, but that's all right. The best thing is having the full score, but I can always return to the W/B Archives and "reconstruct" it from the Parts. But that is *really* time-consuming! I managed to do a bit of the Main Title and Reel 3/1 ("The Plane") last week, but it's a tremendous undertaking. I believe I should contact the Wayne estate and see if *they* are holding the full score. If not, then it's apparently lost!

As given earlier, tomorrow I'm going back to UCLA to finish my work on Rozsa's DEAD MEN score. It'll be enjoyable. I like it there. USC was fine too. At least I didn't have to wear gloves, and I could use my eraser, and I wasn't bugged by attendants or curators! I was left alone to do my work.

Good night!
